

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Relationship among Involvement Characteristics, Fashion Innovativeness, and Fashion Opinion Leadership of Female College Students

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Based on previous research, there may be positive relationships among Fashion Innovativeness (FI), Fashion Opinion Leadership (FOL), and Consumer Involvement (CI) with clothing fashions. The present study investigated the relationship among fashion-related consumer characteristics (FI and FOL) and consumer involvement characteristics (CI with the purchasing activity and with products including name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in the U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers).

Involvement is one of the factors affecting the consumer decision making process. Involvement reflects a strong motivation in the form of high perceived personal relevance of a product or a service in a particular context. Involvement is activated when the object (a product, service, or promotional message) is perceived as being instrumental in meeting important needs, goals, and values. Thus, one's level of consumer involvement is influenced by personal factors (e.g., self-concept, needs, and values), object or stimulus factors (e.g., instrumental value, differentiation of alternatives, and perceived risk), and situational factors (e.g., temporary vs. stable

conditions, usage situations, and social pressures) (Engel, Blackwell, & Minard, 1990; Zaichkowsky, 1986).

Fashion Innovativeness (FI) refers to a perceived personal preference and/or acceptance for new or avant-garde styles. Fashion Opinion Leadership (FOL) refers to a perceived characteristic reflecting an individual's influence on his or her peer group in the acceptance of a fashion innovation. FI has been found to be positively related to interest in fashion and knowledge of and experience with fashion clothing (Gatignon & Robertson, 1991; Schrank, 1970). FOL has been found to be positively related to attitudes-toward-conformity, self-monitoring and interest in clothing (Davis & Lennon, 1985; Schrank, 1970). It appears that fashion opinion leaders may use clothing as means of attention seeking, as means of conforming to others, and as a vehicle for peer approval. Thus, FI and FOL may be positively related to Consumer Involvement (CI) with clothing fashions.

Data from an existing data set were used for the present study. The subjects of this sample were 261 female college students who were from three 1986 home economics classes. In class, each subject voluntarily completed questionnaires about FI, FOL, and CI with the purchasing activity, and with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fiber. Spearman rank-order correlations were used to test relationships among the variables. To examine currency of the original data, data were also collected from a small sample: 14 female college students from a fall 1992 home economics class. In class, each subject completed the same questionnaires completed by the original sample.

Spearman rank-order correlations from the two data sets were compared to examine any changes in the relationships among FI, FOL, and CI over time.

For the original sample, there was strong positive relationship between Fashion Innovativeness (FI) and Fashion Opinion Leadership (FOL) and no relationship between FI (/FOL) and Consumer Involvement (CI) with purchasing. A positive relationship was found between FI and CI with fashion brand jeans. Also, there were positive relationships between FOL and CI with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, and designer underwear.

Comparisons between the original data (1986) and the new data (1992) indicated some changes in the relationships between FI (/FOL) and CI with particular products. The positive relationships between FOL and CI with name brand sports shoes and designer underwear found with the original sample were not found with the new sample. A positive relationship between FOL and CI with fashion brand jeans was found with the original sample; whereas a negative relationship was found with the new small sample. Furthermore, the positive relationship between FI and CI with fashion brand jeans found with the original sample was not found with the new sample. These changes might be caused by changes in perceptions of the fashionability of particular objects over time. Fashion innovators (/fashion opinion leaders) may be involved differently with the particular objects over time depending on the perceived instrumental values of the particular fashion objects.

Relationship among Involvement Characteristics,
Fashion Innovativeness, and Fashion Opinion Leadership
of Female College Students

by

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Relationship among Involvement Characteristics, Fashion Innovativeness,
and Fashion Opinion Leadership of Female College Students

Chapter I

Introduction

According to Runyon and Stewart (1987), and Hawkins, Best, and Coney (1989), the consumer decision making process is described as including the following stages: problem recognition, search, alternative evaluation, choice and outcome evaluation. The problem recognition stage occurs when the consumer first begins to move toward a purchase decision. The search stage represents the second stage of the process. In this stage, the consumer searches for and gathers information. Alternative evaluation is the prelude to consumer choice because it provides the ranking of preferences necessary for choice. The fourth stage, choice, occurs during the consumer's actual purchasing of the product or service. During the final stage, the consumer evaluates the outcomes (satisfaction or dissonance) of choosing the particular product or service. Terrell (1982) characterized the decision process as a sequence of stages beginning with problem perception and proceeding to deliberation relative to an acceptable solution to the perceived problem. According to Terrell (1982), deliberation activity involves searching for and processing information to evaluate alternative brands and products. The alternatives are evaluated against choice criteria made up of expectations, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs about an acceptable problem solution. Finally, a choice is made and evaluated against needs and expectations (the choice criteria).

There are several factors that influence the consumer decision process.

According to Hawkins et al. (1989), the forces affecting the consumer decision process might be divided into two categories: internal and external factors. External factors include the consumer's social class, status, and culture; values of demographic and subcultural groups in which the consumer belongs; and reference group influence. The internal factors affecting the decision process include an individual's personality, motivation, involvement, memory, learning, attitudes, personal needs, and experience.

Involvement, one of the internal factors affecting the consumer decision process, is a reflection of strong motivation in the form of high perceived personal relevance of a product or service in a particular context. Depending upon the perceived linkage between the individual's motivating influences and the benefits offered by the object, it is a continuum ranging from low to high (Engel, Blackwell & Minard, 1989).

According to Kassarian (1981), three kinds of involvement including purchasing involvement, situation involvement, and product involvement influence involvement with a consumer decision. Equally involving products and situations will produce different purchase patterns for consumers who have different levels of involvement with purchasing in general.

Purchasing involvement (the consumer's involvement with the purchasing activity) is a general measure of the self-relevance of purchasing activities to the individual (Slama & Tashchian, 1985). Purchasing products is an activity with which

people can become involved. Individuals vary in their purchasing involvement.

Some people are more involved with purchasing than others. According to Runyon and Stewart (1987), high involvement is characterized by a high degree of personal relevance and some personal identification with the outcome of a purchase decision.

It is a reflection of the perceived importance of the purchasing process. Consumers who are highly involved in the purchasing process are more active, whereas consumers who are not involved in the purchasing process are more passive.

According to Kassarian (1981), individual differences in purchasing involvement strongly influence buying behavior especially with a low involvement product. Slama and Tashchian (1985) found relationships between purchasing involvement and several demographic characteristics and socioeconomic characteristics including the respondent's stage of family life cycle, education, income, and sex.

According to Zaichkowsky (1985, 1986) and Engel et al. (1989), involvement is the level of perceived personal importance and /or interest evoked by a stimulus (or stimuli) within a specific situation. They described involvement as a function of the following three factors: person, object/stimulus (including products, advertising, and purchase decision), and situation (figure 1).

"The starting point always is with the person — underlying motivations in the form of needs and values which are a reflection of self-concept. Involvement is activated when the object (a product, or promotional message) is perceived as being instrumental in meeting important needs, goals, and values. But the perceived need-satisfying significance of the object will vary from one situation to the next. Therefore, all three factors (person, object, and situation) must be taken into account." (Engel et al., 1989, p. 258)

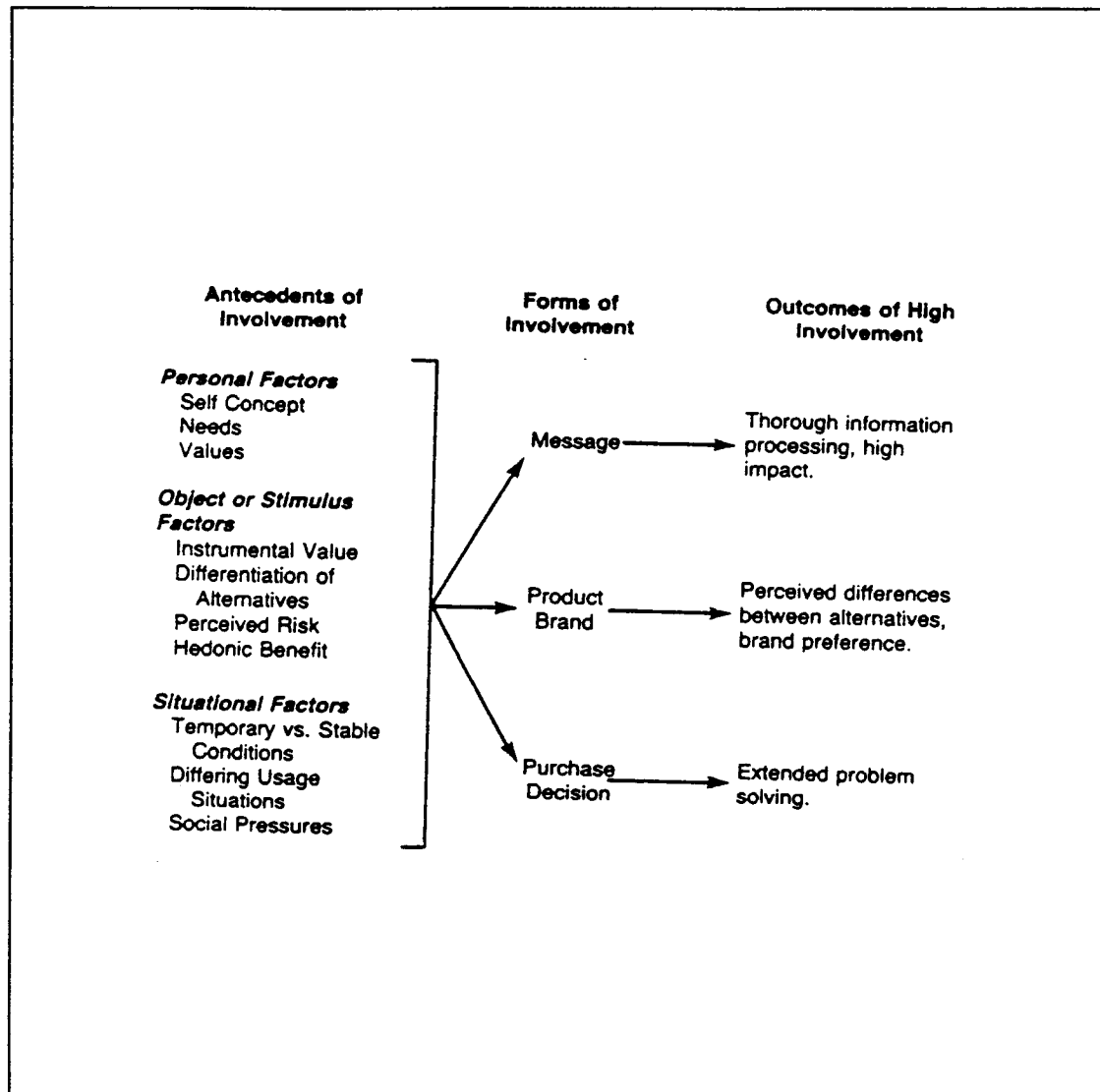


Figure 1. A Conceptualization of Involvement.

From "Conceptualizing involvement" by J. L. Zaichkowsky, 1985, *Journal of Advertising*, 15, p. 6.

According to Zaichkowsky (1985, 1986), consumers can be involved with products, with advertisements, and with purchasing decisions (figure 1). Product involvement (the consumer's involvement with a particular product) was defined as "an un-observable state reflecting the amount of interest, arousal or emotional attachment evoked by the product in a particular individual" (Bloch, 1982, p. 413).

Considering the level of consumer involvement is important to understanding the consumer decision making process. The level of consumer involvement is positively related to the degree of consumer activity in each stage of the decision process (Runyon & Stewart, 1987). The higher the level of consumer involvement, the more motivated the consumer will be to obtain information and process that information (search stage).

External search efforts which are included in the second stage of the consumer decision process, have a positive relationship with purchasing involvement (Beatty & Smith, 1987). Under low involvement conditions, individuals do minimal search, while under high involvement conditions, individuals engage in extensive search (Engel et al., 1989; Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1989). Typically, when consumers are involved, they engage in a number of behaviors (active search, extensive choice process, active information processing, etc). Involvement seems to have a positive effect on recall. Gardner, Mitchell and Russo (1978) found that the high involvement group was able to make brand and attribute evaluations much more rapidly than the low involvement group. In addition, according to Bloch (1980), involvement may be

related to consumer behavior concepts such as opinion leadership, perceived risk, innovativeness, brand loyalty, and information processing.

Consumers have been found to be more involved with clothing than with general products (e.g., TV sets, irons, oil, chocolate, detergents) (Fairhurst, Good & Gentry, 1989; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Traylor & Joseph, 1984). A clothing fashion is a high involvement product with which consumers are more highly involved. Fairhurst, Good and Gentry (1989) measured consumer involvement with women's fashion apparel and labeled this type of involvement as "fashion involvement". They found involvement with women's fashion apparel (fashion involvement) was higher than involvement with other products which Zaichkowsky measured (i.e., bubble bath, facial tissue, instant coffee, color TV and detergent). Consumers highly involved with fashion are an important fashion market segment. According to Tigert, Ring and King (1976), highly fashion involved consumers are also heavy clothing buyers. "While, the highly fashion involved group is relatively small vis-à-vis the total population, that group is much larger in terms of proportionate share of clothing fashions purchased" (p. 51).

According to Sproles (1979), "a clothing fashion is a style of dress that is temporarily adopted by a discernible proportion of members of a social group because that chosen style is perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation" (p. 5). Diffusion theory is used to explain the process by which a fashion object is created, introduced to consumers, adopted by certain leading consumers, diffused or spread to other consumers until it reaches a maximum level of acceptance for a period

of time and terminated as an accepted fashion. The definition of an innovation is any idea, product, or object perceived by the potential innovator to be new (Engel et al., 1989; Rogers, 1983). To decide to adopt or reject an innovation, a consumer goes through the adoption process (Engel et al., 1989; Forsythe, Butler & Kim, 1991; Gatignon & Robertson, 1991; Rogers, 1983; Sproles, 1979). Rogers (1983) classified the types of consumers adopting a new product by their time of adoption as innovators, adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards.

Fashion change agents who initiate and propagate new fashions are classified as fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders. Fashion innovativeness "refers to an individual's preference for new or avant-garde styles" (Sproles, 1979, p. 144). Fashion innovators who have high fashion innovativeness initiate or are the first to adopt an innovative fashion. (Davis, 1987; Sproles, 1979). Fashion opinion leadership is a matter of degree of an individual's influence on others in the fashion diffusion process. Fashion opinion leaders who have higher fashion opinion leadership influence others in the acceptance of a fashion innovation (Davis, 1987; Sproles, 1987). "Through interpersonal communication and contact with others they transmit to their peer group information regarding fashion and experience in use..." (Lennon & Davis, 1987, p.328). From a measurement perspective, most researchers have studied fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership by using self-designating scales.

Although, fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership have been found to be positively correlated (Lennon & Davis, 1987; Schrank & Gilmore, 1973),

fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders serve different functions in the fashion diffusion process (Davis, 1987; Sproles, 1979). Fashion innovators initiate or are the first to adopt an innovative fashion in the fashion diffusion process. Fashion opinion leaders influence others in the acceptance of the fashion innovation and transmit to their peer group information regarding fashion through interpersonal communication and contact with others. In addition, fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders differ in their relationships with several psychological concepts. According to Schrank (1970) and Schrank and Gilmore (1973), fashion innovators have been found to be more secure socially and more tolerant of ambiguity than non-innovators whereas no relationship was found between fashion opinion leadership and social security. On the other hand, fashion opinion leadership has been found to be positively related to attitudes-toward-conformity (Schrank & Gilmore, 1973).

According to Engel et al. (1989), consumers who have a high amount of innovativeness can be identified in terms of socioeconomic (privileged), personality (venturesome), and communication behavior (contact with the mass media and other people) variables. Some variables appear to distinguish innovators from later adopters or non-adopters such as a higher income, higher level of education, a younger age, a greater social mobility, a positive attitude toward risk and a greater social participation (Gatignon & Robertson, 1991). Gatignon and Robertson (1991) found that innovators scored higher on product-category expertise than non-innovators. This may also be inferred from the heavy product-category usage of innovators and their

higher levels of opinion leadership. Therefore, innovativeness in a particular category may be related to consumer involvement with the product category.

Chan and Misra (1990) found a positive relationship between opinion leadership and involvement with a selected product (i.e., wine). Involvement of opinion leaders was found to be significantly higher than involvement of non-leaders. Opinion leaders also had greater familiarity with the product class, greater risk preference and greater public individuation (public individuation is a state in which people feel differentiated, to some degree, from other people and choose to act differently from them) than non-leaders. Similarly, fashion opinion leadership may be positively related to consumer involvement with fashion clothing products.

For the present study, relationships among consumers' involvement with the purchasing process and with fashion objects and consumers' fashion characteristics were investigated. The five fashion objects included clothing made in the U.S.A., clothing made from natural fibers, and name brands or designer label clothing products including name brand active sports shoes, fashion brand jeans and designer underwear.

The importance of brands to the consumer and the symbolism associated with particular brands of apparel and accessories are important considerations in better understanding the consumer decision process (Behling & Wilch, 1988). In the marketplace, consumers discriminate between products based upon their perceptions of product characteristics. Consumers form impressions of product characteristics by using cues such as physical product traits, product price, brand name, advertising,

and past product experience. (Jacoby, Olson, & Haddock, 1971). Brand name (label) influences consumers' perceptions of goods (Behling & Wilch, 1988). According to Behling and Wilch (1988), the labels, which are familiar to subjects, influence subjects' perceived product quality.

On the other hand, brand names which possess symbolic meaning influence the consumers' perception of products. According to Davis (1985, 1988), apparel items carrying a designer label are perceived as being of higher quality and higher fashionability than those carrying a non-designer label. However, consumers may be affected differently by brand names depending on consumers' characteristics. For example, the influence of brand name on perceived product quality may be only evident among consumers who are familiar with the brand name (Behling & Wilch, 1988). The present study examined consumer involvement with and importance of designer labels among commonly worn clothing and private clothing. Sport shoes and jeans are commonly worn accessories and clothing; whereas underwear is private clothing not typically shown in public. Depending upon consumers' fashion characteristics (fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership), consumers may have different involvement levels with known name brands sport shoes (i.e. Nike, Reebok, Adidas, New Balance), fashion brand name jeans (e.g. Calvin Klein, Guess, Generra but not Levi's, Wrangler, or Lee) and designer underwear. Fashion opinion leadership may also be related to consumer involvement with name brand products. Fashion opinion leaders display a high degree of self monitoring (the degree to which individuals monitor their self-presentations to others) (Davis &

Lennon, 1985). Moreover, self-monitoring consumers, as compared to those who do not exhibit self-monitoring, appear to be more willing to pay higher amounts for name-brand products (Lennon, Davis, & Fairhurst, 1988). Therefore, fashion opinion leadership may be related to consumers' involvement with name brand products.

Fiber content of apparel is an important criterion influencing apparel purchase decisions (Hatch & Roberts, 1985). Therefore, an understanding of consumer perceptions of fiber content is important for understanding consumer purchasing behavior. Davis (1988) found that a 100% cotton blouse was rated higher in quality and fashionability than a similar blouse of another fiber content, suggesting that fiber content may have been used by consumers as a surrogate indicator of quality and fashion. According to Forsythe and Thomas (1989), consumers' preferences for and perceptions of various apparel fiber content are complex and cannot be identified through demographic variables alone. Thus it is important to look at other indicators of consumer behavior such as psychographic or lifestyle characteristics. Therefore, relationships between fashion characteristics and consumers' preferences for and perceptions of apparel fiber content were investigated.

The recent concern with the country of origin of clothing manufacturing is a reflection of the public sentiment over the United States' trade deficit (Dickerson, 1982). In a study conducted by Dickerson (1982), a majority of the consumers took notice of whether clothing was imported and preferred to have domestically produced apparel primarily because the garments produced in other countries were perceived as being of poorer quality. In Dickerson's study (1982), demographic variables (i.e.

age, income, and education) and purchasing practices (buying clothing in discount stores vs. in department stores) of consumers were related to the differences between those most concerned with the imported clothing issue and those who were not. Therefore, it may be valuable to study the relationship between consumer fashion characteristics and the level of consumer involvement with and perceived importance of clothing made in the U.S.A..

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between fashion-related consumer characteristics (fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement characteristics (consumer involvement with purchasing activity and with products including name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in the U.S.A. and clothing made from natural fibers). Fashion innovators (who have high fashion innovativeness) and fashion opinion leaders (who have high opinion leadership) play major roles in the fashion diffusion process. In the fashion industry, fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders have been and will continue to be an important target market. Therefore, it is important to understand their characteristics in order to develop effective marketing strategies. By understanding the relationship between fashion innovativeness/opinion leadership and consumer involvement characteristics, we will better understand the decision making of fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders.

Operational Definitions

Clothing fashion: "a style of dress that is temporarily adopted by a discernible proportion of members of a social group because that chosen style is perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation" (Sproles, 1979, p. 5).

Consumer involvement with product (object): perceived personal state reflecting the amount of interest, arousal or emotional attachment by the product (object) in a particular individual (Bloch, 1982).

Consumer involvement with purchasing activity: perceived personal relevance of purchasing activities to the individual (Slama & Tashchian, 1985).

Fashion innovativeness: perceived personal preference or/and acceptance for new or avant-garde styles (Sproles, 1979).

Fashion opinion leadership: perceived characteristic reflecting an individual's influence on his or her peer group in the acceptance of a fashion innovation (Davis, 1987; Sproles, 1987⁵).

Involvement: the level of perceived personal importance and/or interest evoked by a stimulus (or stimuli) (Engel et al., 1989; Zaichkowsky, 1986).

Hypotheses

H1..H6: There is a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement including:

H1: purchasing involvement (consumer involvement with purchasing activity)

H2: consumer involvement with name brands sports shoes (e.g. Nike, Reebok, Adidas, New Balance, etc.)

H3: consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans (e.g. Calvin Klein, Guess, Generra not Levi's, Wrangler, or Lee)

H4: consumer involvement with designer underwear

H5: consumer involvement with clothing made in U.S.A.

H6: consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fibers

H7..H12: There is a positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement including:

H7: purchasing involvement (consumer involvement with purchasing activity)

H8: consumer involvement with name brands sports shoes

H9: consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans

H10: consumer involvement with designer underwear

H11: consumer involvement with clothing made in U.S.A.

H12: consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fibers

H13: There is a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Consumer Decision Making Process

Wilkie (1986) described the consumer decision making process as four essential stages: problem recognition, information search and alternative evaluation, purchase process, and post-purchase process. Runyon and Stewart (1987), and Hawkins, Best, and Coney (1989) described the consumer decision making process as five steps: (1) the recognition of a problem which occurs when the consumer first begins to move toward a purchase decision; (2) a search for alternative ways of satisfying the problem's requirements, or search for information; (3) alternative evaluation which is the prelude to consumer choice because it provides the ranking of preferences necessary for choice; (4) purchase decision or choice which occurs during consumer's actual purchasing of the product or service; and (5) post purchase process whereby consumers evaluate the adequacy of the decision or the outcomes (satisfaction or dissonance) of choosing the particular product or service.

Factors influencing consumer decision making process. According to Runyon and Stewart (1987), Engel et al. (1989), Terell (1982), Walters and Bergiel (1989), and Wilkie (1986), situational factors and consumer characteristics including demographic, economic, and psychological characteristics influence consumer behavior.

According to Engel et al. (1989), the following factors influence the consumer decision making process: (1) environmental factors including cultural and ethnic

values, social status, reference groups, and situational influence; (2) individual differences including consumer resources (i.e., economic resources, temporal resources, cognitive resources), involvement, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, personality, demographics and lifestyle; and (3) psychological processes including information processing, learning attitudes and behavior change (figure 2).

Many researchers have found factors that influence the information search stage of the decision process (Beatty & Smith, 1987; Runyon & Stewart, 1987; Shim & Drake, 1988; Terrell, 1982; Tellis, 1987). According to Moore and Lehmann (1980), the following variables influence search behavior: (1) market environment characteristics including the number of alternatives, complexity of alternatives, mix of alternatives in the market (new alternatives) and information availability; (2) situation variables including time pressure, social pressure (e.g. family, peer, boss), financial pressure, organizational procedures, physical and mental condition and ease of access to information sources; (3) potential payoff/product importance including price, social visibility, perceived risk, difference among alternatives, number of crucial attributes and status of decision making activity (in the family, organization, society); (4) knowledge and experience including stored knowledge, usage rate of product, previous information, previous choices (number and identity), and satisfaction; and (5) individual differences including involvement, ability, training, approach to problem solving (compulsiveness, open-mindedness, preplanning, innovativeness), approach to search (enjoyment of shopping, sources of information, etc), demographics and personality/life style variables.

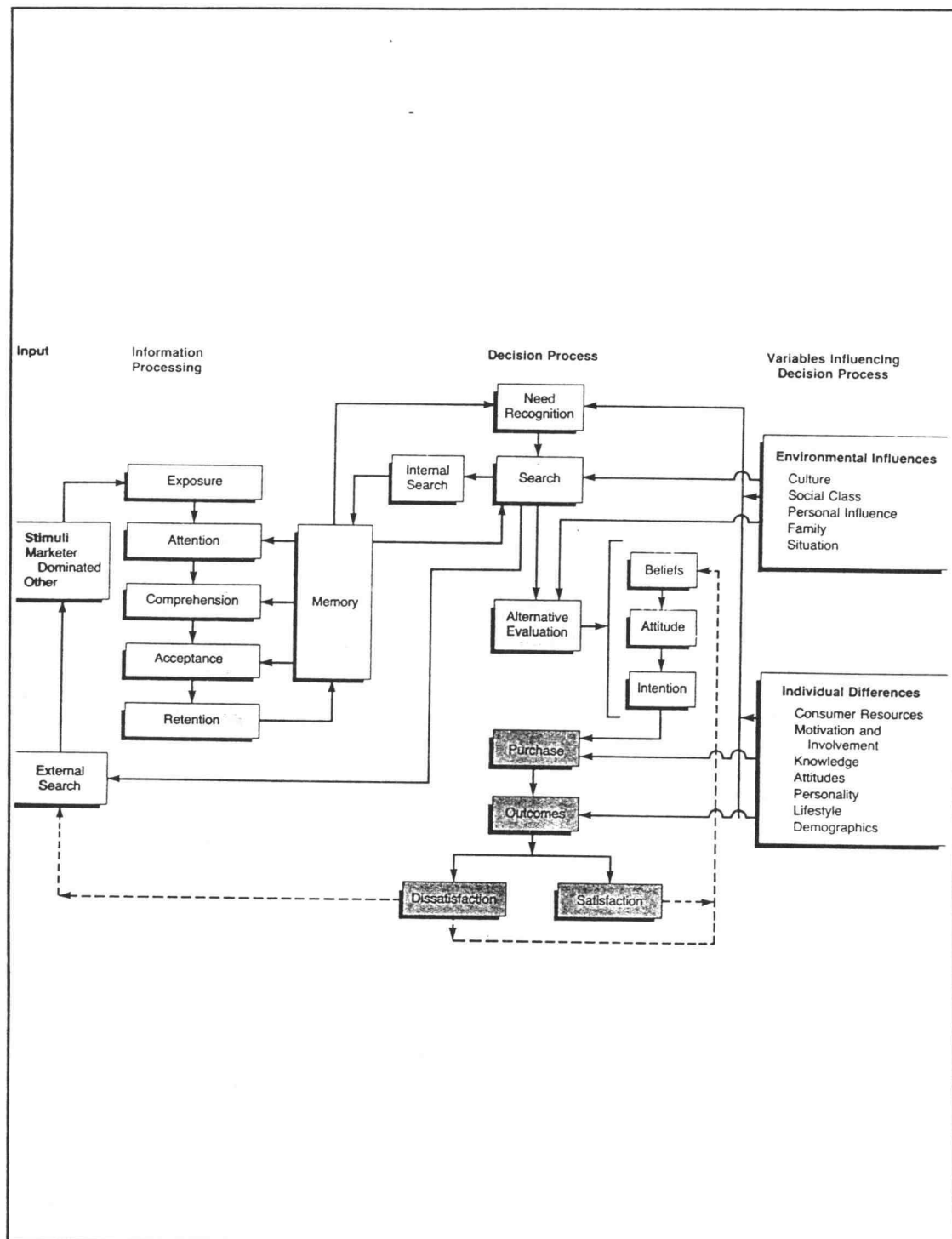


Figure 2. A Complete Model of Consumer Behavior.

From *Consumer Behavior* (p. 482) by J. F. Engel, R. D. Blackwell, and P. W. Miniard, 1989.

Shim and Drake (1989) identified five different patterns of external information search among employed women purchasers of apparel: (1) print-oriented search pattern which includes reading magazines or newspapers, (2) audio-visual oriented search pattern which includes watching TV or listening to the radio, (3) store intensive search pattern which includes looking at displays of clothing in stores or reading retail store catalogs, (4) professional advice search pattern which includes talking to wardrobe consultants or participating in seminars for successful dress, and (5) pal advice search pattern which includes talking to friends/career colleagues or family/relatives. They also found that several consumer characteristics influenced consumers' patterns of external search for information to use in apparel selection including possessing a traditional view of women, opinion leadership, conservatism, attractiveness, seeking information from friends, fashion-consciousness, travel-proneness, financial pessimism, contemporaneousness, self-confidence in dress, planned shopping, pro-education attitude, use of credit, and price-consciousness.

External and internal factors. According to Hawkins et al. (1989), the forces affecting the consumer decision process might be divided into internal and external forces. External forces include social class and status, culture, values of demographic and subcultural groups, and reference group influence. The internal factors affecting the decision process include the individual's personality, motivation, involvement, memory, learning, attitudes, personal needs, and experience.

Involvement, one of the internal factors affecting consumer decision making process, is a reflection of strong motivation in the form of high perceived personal

relevance of a product or high perceived personal relevance of service in a particular context. A higher degree of involvement causes a more extended consumer decision process (Runyon & Stewart, 1987). The consumer decision process thus depends on the consumer's level of involvement (Engel et al., 1989).

Involvement

Concept of involvement. Involvement, one of the internal factors affecting the consumer decision process, is best conceived as a function of person, object and situation. The starting point always is with the person's underlying motivations in the form of needs and values. Involvement is activated when the object (a product, service, or promotional message) is perceived as being instrumental in meeting important needs, goals, and values. But the perceived need-satisfying significance of the object will vary from one situation to the next. Depending upon the perceived linkage between the individual's motivating influences and the benefits offered by object, it is a continuum ranging from low to high. It becomes activated as felt involvement when intrinsic personal characteristics (i.e., needs, values, self-concept) are confronted with appropriate marketing stimuli within a given situation (Engel et al., 1989).

Effects of involvement. Runyon and Stewart (1987) proposed that high involvement is characterized by a high degree of personal relevance and some personal identification with the outcome of a purchase decision. It is a reflection of the perceived importance of the purchasing process. The level of purchasing involvement is positively related to the degree of consumer activity in each stage of

the decision process (Runyon & Stewart, 1987). The higher the level of involvement in purchasing, the more motivated the consumer will be to obtain information and process that information (search stage).

Depending on their levels of involvement, consumers differ in the extent of their decision process and their search for information (figure 3) (Engel et al., 1989; Hawkins et al., 1989; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Runyon & Stewart, 1987). Figures 3 and 4 show the relationships between types of decision making (habitual, limited and extended) and level of involvement (low and high) (Hawkins et al., 1989).

Factors affecting involvement. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) studied the measurement of consumer involvement profiles. Their research proposed that the nuances in meanings of involvement are derived from differences in the five antecedent conditions producing involvement: perceived importance of the product or situation, perceived pleasure value, perceived sign value, and perceived risk (itself divided in two subcomponents; risk importance and risk probability). They found that some facets of involvement influenced specific behaviors but not other behaviors. They (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985) conducted additional research with the purpose to present the rationale and the main aspects of their new approach to the conceptualization and measurement of consumer involvement. According to this research, involvement is derived from a limited number of antecedents: (1) the interest in the product, (2) the rewarding nature of the product (perceived pleasure value), (3) the sign value of the product (its perceived ability to mirror the purchaser's personality or status), (4) the perceived importance of negative

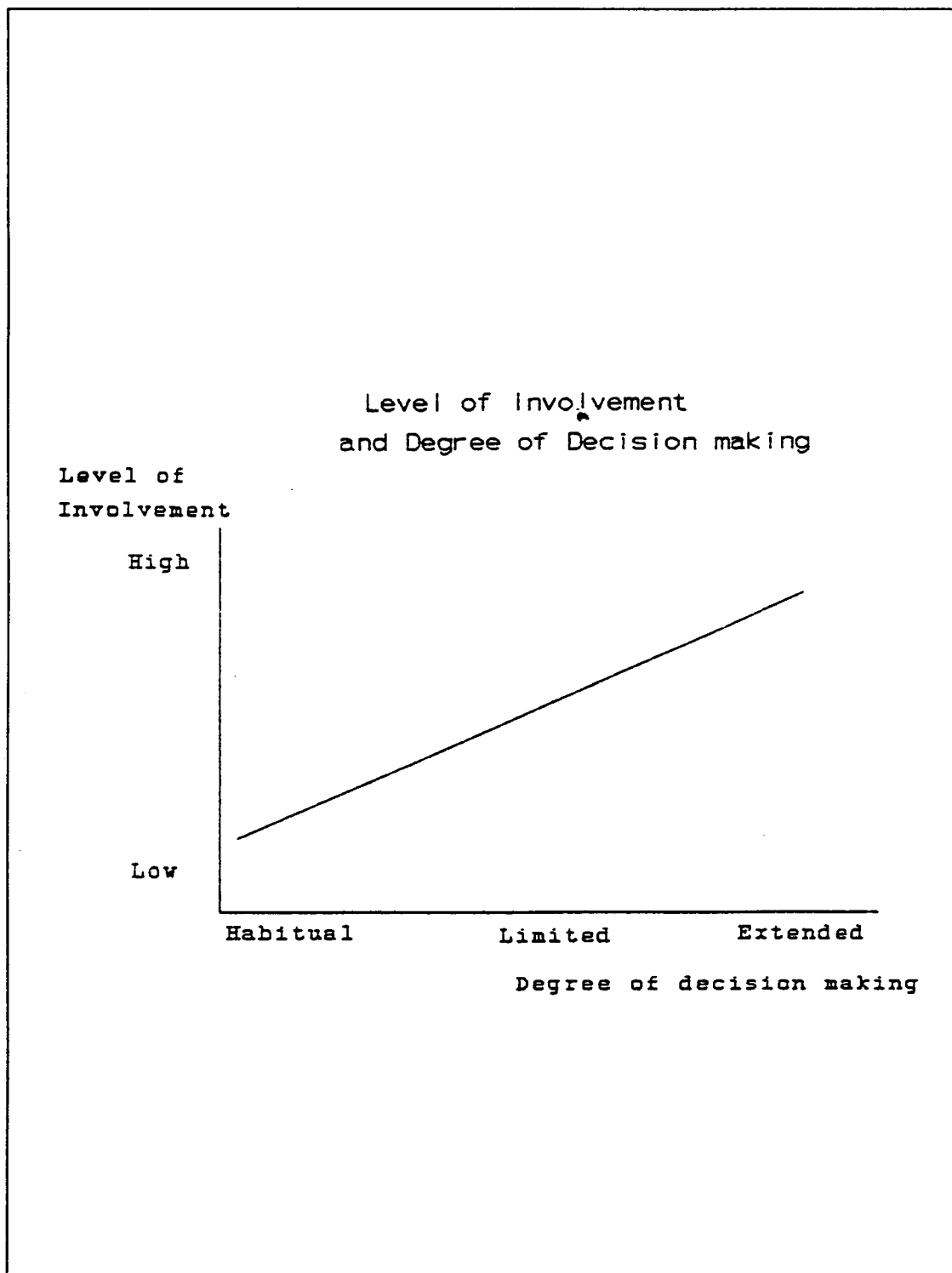


Figure 3. Level of Involvement and Degree of Decision Making.

From Consumer behavior (p. 31) by D. I. Hawkins, R. T. Best, and K. A. Coney, 1986.

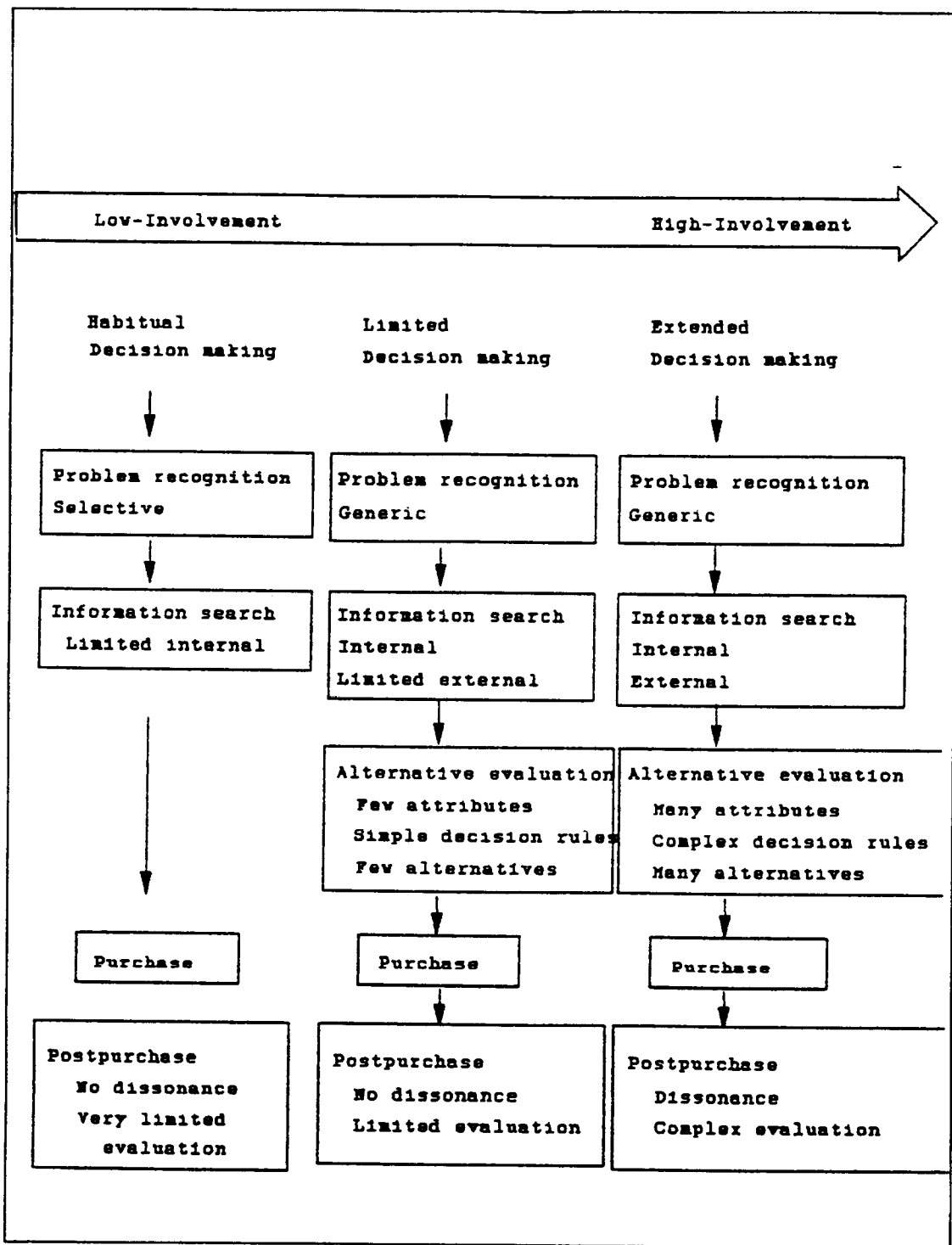


Figure 4. Involvement and Types of Decision Making.

From Consumer behavior (p. 532) by D. I. Hawkins, R. T. Best, and K. A. Coney, 1986.

consequences in case of a poor choice, and (5) the subjective probability of making such a poor choice.

Bloch (1982) focused on the expression of self-concept as a possible reason for consumer's enduring involvement (a state by which the individual persists over situations and can range from near zero to the very high levels exhibited by product enthusiasts or connoisseurs) with automobiles and clothing. In the case of clothing, the results indicated strong relationship between enduring involvement and particular self-concept dimensions including perception of being drab/stylish, attention-seeking/quiet, up-to-date/old fashioned, and attractive/unattractive. The results show that clothing-involved persons feel more fashionable, attractive and prone to receive attention as a result of their particular enduring involvement.

Engel et al. (1989) and Zaichkowsky (1986) identified the antecedents of consumer involvement as person factors including self concept, needs and values; stimulus or object factors including instrumental value, differentiation of alternatives, perceived risk and hedonic benefit; and situation factors including temporary versus stable conditions, differing usage situations and social pressures (figure 1).

Matrix of involvement. There are many terms used to modify the term involvement: ego, product, brand, enduring, responses, situation, and purchase involvement (Beatty, Kahle & Homer, 1988; Houston & Rothschild, 1978).

According to Kassarian (1981), Slama (1982) and Slama and Tashchian (1985), there are three types of involvement: product involvement, situation involvement, and purchasing involvement.

Consumer involvement with purchasing means the self-relevance of purchasing activities to the individual (Slama & Tashchian, 1985). According to Kassarian (1981), consumers with different characteristics will have different levels of purchasing involvement which will influence their buying behavior. Especially in the low-involvement product (e.g., milk) and situation, individual differences in purchasing involvement strongly influence buying behavior.

Slama (1982) developed a scale to measure purchasing involvement. In using this scale, Slama and Tashchian (1985) found a relationship between purchasing involvement and several demographic characteristics and socioeconomic characteristics including the stage of family life cycle, education, income, and sex. Those individuals at stages of the family cycle with children at home had higher purchasing involvement than those without children at home. Higher educated people had higher purchasing involvement. Those with moderate levels of income had the highest levels of involvement ("a curvilinear relationship" between income and purchasing involvement). Women had higher levels of purchasing involvement than men. According to Slama(1981),

"consumers with high purchasing involvement would be more concerned with the value of the contents of the package rather than the package itself. Point of purchase displays would have the greatest influence on moderately involved consumers. Low involved consumers might habitually purchase the same product regardless of displays and high involvement consumers would find price and quality more important than displays" (p. 105).

According to Slama and Tashchian (1985),

"The logical approach to using involvement as an explainer of purchase behavior is to specify the level of product involvement, the level of the target market's involvement with purchasing, and the major purchase situations. If

this were done, the marketer could more accurately predict the type of purchase behavior that might occur" (p. 79).

Traylor and Joseph (1984) developed a general scale measuring consumer involvement with products that can be applied across product categories. This scale measures how highly the consumer is involved with a particular product. In their work, high or medium priced durable products including automobiles, record albums, blue jeans, wrist watches and stereo speakers have high product involvement. On the other hand, low priced nondurable products including toothpaste, milk, cola, socks, dry cereal, potato chips, and gasoline have low product involvement. Therefore consumers appear to be more involved with certain durable, costly items that they buy infrequently than with less expensive products that they purchase frequently.

Another measurement instrument designed to tap consumer involvement is Zaichkowsky's (1985) Personal Involvement Inventory which has twenty scale items. This inventory measures consumer involvement with a product, with advertising, and with purchasing decisions.

Kassarjian (1981) proposed a six-fold classification of involvement including both high and low product involvement (or situation effect) and also high and low involved personality types (figure 5). From this perspective, consumers with different characteristics will have different levels of purchasing involvement which will influence their buying behavior.

Bloch (1982) defined product involvement as "an un-observable state reflecting the amount of interest, arousal or emotional attachment evoked by the product in a particular individual" (p. 413) and enduring involvement as "an inner state of the

Situation Effect or Product Involvement			
		High	Low
Individual or Personality Factors	High Involvement	Much of consumer knowledge as it exists today	typical low involvement research
	Low Involvement	Minimal interest but narrowly and intensely focused	Oblivious to product issues other interests
	Low Involvement "know-nothing"	Choice determined by: Availability Packaging Affordability	Don't know Don't care and No opinion

Figure 5. Classification of Involvement

From "Low involvement: a second look" by H. H. Kassarijian, 1981, Advances in Consumer Research, 8, p. 32.

individual that reflects a long term product interest or attachment" (p. 413). One's expression of self-concept is believed to be an underlying reason for enduring involvement with a product. It was found that the following variables were related to consumer's enduring involvement with clothing: (1) self-rated knowledge of clothing; (2) information dissemination about clothing; (3) fashion magazine readership; and (4) interest in the topic of clothing.

According to Houston and Rothschild (1978), situation involvement refers to the ability of a situation to elicit from individuals concern for their behavior in that situation. When most or all people who interact with a situation develop a high level of concern for their subsequent behavior in the situation, the situation is high in involvement.

Summary. Involvement, one of the internal factors affecting the consumer decision process, is the level of perceived personal importance and/or interest evoked by stimuli (i.e. product or service, advertising and purchasing decision process) in a particular context (Engel et al., 1989; Zaichkowsky, 1986). Involvement is best conceived as a function of person, object (including products, advertising and purchasing decision process) and situation.

Involvement is a continuum ranging from low to high depending on the interaction of individual, object and situation characteristics. Depending upon different levels of consumer involvement, consumer buying behavior will vary. The higher the level of consumer involvement, the more motivated the consumer will be to extend their decision making process.

The following factors affect consumer involvement; (1) person factors including self concept, needs and values; (2) stimulus or object factors including instrumental value, differentiation of alternatives, perceived risk and hedonic benefit; and (3) situation factors including temporary versus stable condition, differing usage situations and social pressures (figure 1). The present study focused on an investigation of the relationship between consumer involvement characteristics and fashion-related consumer characteristics.

Diffusion of Innovation

Rogers' diffusion theory is used to explain the fashion process. According to Rogers (1983), an innovation is an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual. Diffusion of innovation means that the innovation is communicated through certain channels, over time, among the members of a social system (Rogers, 1983). To decide whether to adopt or reject an innovation, a consumer goes through the adoption process (Engel et al, 1989; Gatignon et al., 1991; Rogers, 1983; Sproles, 1979).

Diffusion is the spread of a fashion object within and across social systems. Sproles (1985) described the stages of the fashion diffusion process as (1) invention and introduction of new styles, (2) adoption by fashion leader, (3) increasing social visibility, (4) conformity within and across social groups, (5) social saturation, and (6) decline and obsolescence. At each stage of the diffusion process, consumers adopt/purchase fashion objects.

Fashion diffusion process (fashion life-cycle). "Fashions evolve consistent with the theoretical product life cycle, having stages of introduction and adoption by fashion leaders, increasing public acceptance (growth), mass conformity (maturation), and the inevitable decline and obsolescence awaiting all fashions" (Sproles, 1981, p. 116).

According to Sproles (1985), the fashion process follows the following life-cycle (diffusion process).

1. Invention and introduction. A source of fashion objects, such as a fashion designer, entrepreneur, or consumer innovator creates an object that is noticeably different from its predecessors.
2. Fashion leadership. A small proportion of the most fashion-conscious consumers (fashion leaders) adopt and introduce it to the public.
3. Increasing social visibility. The fashion receives increasing endorsement among other fashion-conscious consumers, thus becoming more visible among a wider range of social groups and life-styles.
4. Conformity within and across social groups. The fashion achieves social legitimacy, and the compelling forces of conformity, communications, and mass marketing propagate widespread adoption of the fashion.
5. Social saturation. The fashion becomes a daily occurrence in the lives of many, and in fact becomes overused, thus setting the stage for its decline.
6. Decline and obsolescence. New fashions are introduced as replacements of the socially saturated fashion, and use of the old fashion recedes (p. 56).

Categories of fashion adopters. Consumers fall into groups of adopters depending on their fashion innovativeness or when they adopt a fashion. Rogers (1983) classified the types of consumers adopting a new product by their time of adoption as innovators, early adopters, early majority, later majority, and laggards.

According to Sproles (1979), consumer types have been divided into six categories; (1) fashion innovators who initiate or are the first to adopt an innovative fashion object; (2) fashion opinion leaders/early conformists who adopt the style and influence others in the acceptance of fashion innovation through interpersonal communication and contact with others; (3) mass market consumers who adopt the style during the acceptance stage (increasing social visibility and conformity within and across social groups stages); (4) late fashion followers who adopt it during its decline; (5) fashion isolates (and laggards) who adopt the style once it has entered the stage of obsolescence; and (6) non-adopters. A number of researchers have investigated relationships between adopter categories and selected social, psychological and economical variables. What follows is a discussion of research focused on fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership.

Fashion innovativeness "refers to an individual's preference for new or avant-garde styles" (Sproles, 1979, p. 144). According to Rogers (1983) and Engel et al. (1989), innovators have a high amount of innovativeness which is the degree to which an individual is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas (innovations) than the other members of his/her social system. Innovators can be identified in terms of socioeconomic (privileged), personality (venturesome), and communication behavior (contact with the mass media and other people) variables (Rogers, 1983). Some variables appear to distinguish innovators from later adopters or non-adopters such as a higher income, higher level of education, a younger age, a greater social mobility, a positive attitude toward risk and a greater social participation (Gatignon & Robertson,

1991). Gatignon and Robertson (1991) suggested that innovators are higher in product-category expertise. This may be inferred from the heavy product-category usage of innovators. "Innovators are heavy users within the product category and may have significant experience in related product categories." (Gatignon & Robertson, 1991, p.326)

Schrank (1970) focused on fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership as related to social insecurity, attitudes toward conformity, clothing interest and socioeconomic level. The subjects of this study were 145 college women in an sociology course. She found an inverse relationship between fashion innovativeness and social insecurity, a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and clothing interest. The fashion innovators felt more socially secure and were more interested in clothing. However, no relationship was found between fashion innovativeness and socioeconomic level.

Fashion opinion leadership refers to perceived characteristic reflecting an individual's influence to his or her peer group in the acceptance of a fashion innovation (Davis, 1987; Sproles, 1987). Schrank (1970) found positive relationships between fashion opinion leadership and attitudes toward conformity. Fashion opinion leaders valued conformity in dress. Fashion opinion leadership also was positively related to clothing interest.

Polegato and Wall (1980) studied differences between information sources of fashion opinion leaders and followers at three adoption stages (awareness stage, comprehension stage, and legitimation stage). The sample included 406 female

university students from seven different colleges within the university. They found that both fashion opinion leaders and followers used marketer-dominated sources (including window displays, fashion magazines, ads in campus newspapers, radio programs, fashion shows, in store displays, fashion counsellors, mail order catalogues, pattern books, salespeople, and ads in other newspapers), whereas the followers used consumer-dominated sources (including classmates, female friends-discussion, female friends-visible, social gatherings, public places, and male friends). During the legitimization stage, the fashion opinion leaders used a greater number of sources than the followers but they did not differ in the type of sources designed as most important in this stage. Leaders and followers could not be differentiated by demographic characteristics (age, population of home community, college and degree program enrolled in, semester level, on-or-off campus residence, or socioeconomic status).

Fashion opinion leadership was found to be positively related to self-monitoring (Davis & Lennon, 1985). In this study, subjects were 50 female college students in an introductory family life course. Each subject completed self-designating scales including the self-monitoring scale, fashion opinion leadership scale, and three sub-scales measuring conformity, security, and individuality. They found that persons with high fashion opinion leadership also had high levels of self-monitoring. In addition, high self-monitors were found to use clothing to be socially appropriate, as vehicle for peer approval, and as a means of drawing attention to themselves.

Lennon and Davis (1987) investigated individual differences in cognitive complexity, fashion innovativeness, and fashion opinion leadership. Fifty undergraduate women completed a self-designating scale measuring fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. The researchers measured the subjects' level of cognitive complexity by the paragraph completion method. A negative relationship between fashion opinion leadership and level of cognitive complexity was found. A low level of cognitive complexity is equated with concern for behaving in socially acceptable manner and expressions of anxiety about incorrect actions. However, a small positive relationship between cognitive complexity and fashion innovativeness was found. They also found a positive correlation between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership.

Baumgarten (1975) profiled the characteristics of fashion innovative communicators (12.1% of this sample) who were defined as being both fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders, among male college students (a stratified random sample of 389 unmarried male undergraduates at Purdue University).

A general profile of the campus fashion innovative communicator is that of a freshman or sophomore who is very active socially, narcissistic, highly appearance-conscious, and strongly attuned to the rock culture. He reads more of the popular mass media... He is highly involved with the fashion scene, and spends more on clothing, knows more about fashion, and owns more different styles than do others. He is more exhibitionistic, more impulsive, more limited in intellectual interest than other students, strongly oriented toward more student power on campus... more racist than other students. (p. 17-18)

Summary. The diffusion process of a new fashion object can be categorized into six stages: (1) invention and introduction of new styles, (2) adoption by fashion

leaders, (3) increasing social visibility, (4) conformity within and across social groups, (5) social saturation, and (6) decline and obsolescence. Fashion innovators initiate or are the first to adopt an innovative fashion. Fashion opinion leaders and early conformists adopt the style and influence others in the acceptance of the fashion innovation. Mass market consumers adopt the style during the acceptance stages (the increasing social visibility stage and the conformity within/across social groups stage). Late fashion followers adopt the fashion object during its decline. Fashion isolates (and laggards) adopt the style once it has entered the stage of obsolescence. Non-adopters do not adopt the style.

In past research (Hirschman & Adcock, 1978; Lennon & Davis, 1987; Polegato & Wall, 1980; Schrank, 1970; Schrank & Gilmore, 1973), relationships between fashion innovativeness (or fashion opinion leadership) and demographic variables, psychographic characteristics, and information resources used have been investigated. For example, fashion innovativeness has been found to be positively related to tolerance of ambiguity and social security (Schrank & Gilmore, 1973). Fashion innovators were more secure socially and more tolerant of ambiguity than non-innovators while no relationship was found between fashion opinion leadership and social security. Also, a negative relationship between fashion opinion leadership and cognitive complexity and a small positive relationship between cognitive complexity and fashion innovativeness have been found (Lennon & Davis, 1987). Fashion innovators were suggested to tolerate uncertainty, ambiguity, and difference of opinion, and to not tend to compromise their values to please others or to confirm.

On the other hand, fashion opinion leadership have been found to be positively related to attitudes-toward-conformity and interest in clothing. Fashion opinion leadership has been found to be positively related to self-monitoring (Davis & Lennon, 1985). It seems that the fashion opinion leaders may use clothing as means of attention seeking, as means of conforming to others, and as a vehicle for peer approval. However, fashion innovators and fashion opinion leaders tend to be younger than the general population, and they have a higher level of clothing interest.

Fashion innovators may be higher in knowledge of fashion clothing, experience with fashion clothing (Gatignon & Robertson, 1991), and interest in fashion (Schrack, 1970). Thus, there may be a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with clothing fashion.

Because fashion opinion leaders were found to possess lower levels of cognitive complexity, they may tend to behave in a socially acceptable manner and express anxiety about incorrect actions. Moreover they are attention seekers. Thus they use clothing as a means of conforming to others as well as a means of attention seeking. Also, they have higher level of interest in clothing than non-leaders. Thus fashion opinion leadership may also be related to involvement with clothing fashions.

Brand Name, Domestic Clothing, Fiber Content

The present study investigated consumer involvement with specific fashion object characteristics including brand name, domestic clothing, and natural fibers. Brand name, country of origin, and fiber content of apparel products can affect consumers' perception of the clothing products (Davis, 1985; Dickerson, 1982). In

addition, consumer characteristics can be related to perceptions of brand name, domestic clothing, and natural fibers (Behling & Wilch, 1988; Holstius & Paltschik, 1983).

Brand name. According to Davis (1985), the presence of a brand label affects consumers' perceptions of clothing quality. In this study, 78 women individually examined and rated the quality of one of two similarly styled skirts. For half of the subjects, the skirt was high in quality, and for half it was low in quality. In addition, the skirt had either a non-designer brand label, a designer brand label, or no brand-label attached to it. The subjects' perceptions of quality of non-designer label ("Jazzy") skirt and designer ("Calvin Klein") skirt were higher than the unlabeled skirt. Consumers apparently used a brand label as an extrinsic cue to clothing quality.

Consumer characteristics may influence consumer behavior toward or perception of brand. Holstius and Paltschik (1983) investigated fashion interest and perceptions of brands of apparel. The male participants in a course arranged by the Finnish Institute of Management were chosen as subjects, and divided into two groups. Two pairs of manufacturer labeled neckties were used as experimental stimuli. For one group, one of the tie's label was exchanged for a designer (Pierre Cardin) label. Subjects stated the highest price he would be willing to pay and the perceived quality of the ties. A five-point bipolar scale measuring interest in fashion was included in the questionnaire. The researchers found that subjects who were

more interested in fashion were willing to pay a higher price for the designer labeled tie than subjects with lower interest in fashion.

Domestic clothing. Dickerson (1982) found a majority of the consumers took notice of whether clothing was imported and preferred to have domestically produced apparel primarily because the garments produced in other countries were perceived as being of poorer quality. In this study, a structured telephone interview schedule was used to survey 408 consumers chosen randomly from telephone directories in 10 selected areas of the eastern U.S. including Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi. Subjects consisted of 277 women, 119 men, and unidentified 12 persons. Several demographic variables (i.e. age, income) and purchasing practices (buying clothing in discount store vs. in department store) of respondents were found to moderate differences between those most concerned over the imported clothing issue and those who were not. Subjects who were from 30 to 70 years old had stronger sentiment in favor of domestic clothing over imports than subjects under 30 and over 70 years of age. Subjects of middle-income categories (\$10,000-\$40,000) were more concerned about buying domestic than either lower and higher income categories.

According to Shim, Morris, and Morgan (1989), attitudes toward domestic clothing is influenced by the level of fashion involvement, social acceptance, the clothing attitude toward social activities, and the clothing attitude toward garment styling. Thus, college students who had favorable attitudes toward domestic clothing tended to have high level of fashion involvement, tended to think that they were socially accepted, were likely to believe that clothing influenced the type of social

activities in which they participated, and tended to think that garment features (i.e., color, shape of collar) were important in determining whether a garment was in style.

Fiber content. Davis (1988) found that a 100% cotton blouse was rated higher in quality and fashionability than a similar blouse of another fiber content, suggesting that fiber content may have been used by consumers as a surrogate indicator of quality and fashion. In this study, college female subjects were assigned to two simulated "shopping" tasks, and the subjects rated four white blouses on quality and fashionability based on their information obtained from an information display board.

According to Forsythe and Thomas (1989), consumers' preferences for and perceptions of various apparel fiber content are complex and cannot be identified through demographic variables alone. Thus it is important to look at other indicators of consumer behavior such as psychographic or lifestyle characteristics. Therefore, relationships between fashion characteristics and consumers' preferences for and perceptions of apparel fiber content was investigated in the present study.

Summary. The present study investigated consumer involvement with specific fashion object characteristics including brand name, domestic clothing, and natural fiber. Consumer characteristics can be related to perceptions of brand name, domestic clothing, and natural fibers (Behling & Wilch, 1988; Holstius & Paltschik, 1983). Brand names which possess symbolic meaning influence the consumers' perception of products. According to Davis (1985, 1988), apparel items carrying a designer label are perceived as being of higher quality and higher fashionability than those that carry a non-designer label. However, consumers may be differently

affected by brand names depending on consumers' characteristics. Consumers who are more interested in fashion may be willing to pay a higher price for the designer label than consumer with low interest in fashion (Holstius & Paltschik, 1983).

Because fashion innovativeness /fashion opinion leadership has been found to be positively related to interest in fashion (Schrunk, 1970), consumers who have high fashion innovativeness or fashion opinion leadership may be more involved with clothing with designer label (or brand name).

Fiber content of apparel is an important criterion influencing apparel purchase decision (Hatch & Roberts, 1985). Davis (1988) found that a 100% cotton blouse was rated higher in quality and fashionability than a similar blouse of other fiber content, suggesting that fiber content may have been used by consumers as a surrogate indicator of quality and fashion. Fashion characteristics may be related to consumer preference for and perception of apparel fiber content because certain fiber (e.g., cotton) was perceived as fashionable.

A majority of the consumers perceived domestic clothing as being of better quality than imported goods (Dickerson, 1982). Consumers who have favorable attitudes toward domestic clothing may have a high level of fashion involvement and may be likely to think that they are socially accepted (Shim et al., 1989). Thus fashion innovativeness\ fashion opinion leadership may be related to consumer involvement with domestic clothing. Consumer involvement with these clothing product characteristics may be an indicator of the consumer's behavior toward products which have these characteristics. Because fashion innovativeness and fashion

opinion leadership are the characteristics of two important fashion market segments, an investigation of the relationships between consumer involvement with the fashion object characteristics (i.e., brand name, domestic clothing, and natural fibers) and fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership will facilitate a greater understanding of consumer decision making of these market segments.

Chapter III

Method

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between fashion-related consumer characteristics (fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement characteristics (consumer involvement with the purchasing activity and with products including name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A. and clothing made from natural fibers). The sample used for this study, the questionnaires used for measuring fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement, and statistical methods used are discussed in this chapter.

Subjects

Original sample. Data from an existing data set, which included information on purchasing involvement, consumer involvement with clothing products and fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership, were used for the present study.

The subjects included in this sample were 261 female college students who were from three home economics classes (68 from winter 1986 class, 76 from spring 1986 class and 117 from fall 1986 class). The subjects' ages ranged from 18 to 42 years with mean age being 20.5 years. In class, each subject voluntarily completed questionnaires about fashion innovativeness, fashion opinion leadership, and consumer involvement with purchasing activity, name brand sports shoes,

fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers.

New sample. To examine currency of original data, data were also collected from a small sample: 14 female college students from a fall 1992 home economics class. In class, each subject completed the same questionnaires which were completed by the original sample.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires included scales measuring fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership (appendix a), purchasing involvement (appendix b), and consumer involvement with products (appendix c).

Scale to measure fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership.

Hirschman and Adcock (1978) developed the scale used in the present study which consists of six self-identification items. It includes three questions measuring fashion innovativeness and three questions measuring fashion opinion leadership. Possible scores can range from 3 to 12 for both fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership sub-scales.

Scale to measure consumer involvement with purchasing activity . Consumer involvement with purchasing relates to self-relevance of purchasing activities to the individual (Slama & Tashchian, 1985). Slama (1982) developed a scale designed to measure individual differences in consumers' involvement with purchasing. This scale consists of 33 Likert-type scale items. Possible scores on this purchasing involvement scale can range from 33 to 198.

Scale to measure consumer involvement with products. Zaichkowsky (1985)

designed the Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) which measures how highly involved the consumer is with a particular product. The PII has 20 scale items. Possible scores on the PII can range from 20 to 140. For the present study, this scale was used to measure consumer involvement with clothing products including name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made from natural fibers, and clothing made in U.S.A.

Analysis

Spearman's rank-order correlation statistic was used to examine the relationship between consumer fashion characteristics (fashion innovativeness & fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with the purchasing activity, and with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers. As a non-parametric statistic, Spearman's rank-order correlation does not require some of the assumptions "that must be made if one wishes to generalize to a population from a correlation based on a sample" (Young & Veldman, 1977, p. 423). Because rank-order correlation test checks non-linear relationships by using the ranks of the X and Y observations rather the observations themselves, normal distributions of both X and Y are not needed. In addition, the rank-order correlation is not as sensitive as Pearson's correlation coefficient to outlying points far from the main part of scatter plot (Devore & Peck, 1986). Using a Chi-square test (goodness-of-fit test for normality), it was discovered that the original data (including fashion innovativeness ($\chi^2=8.2$ with 3

d.f.), fashion opinion leadership ($\chi^2=20.5865$ with 6 d.f.), purchasing involvement ($\chi^2=38.0511$ with 24 d.f.), and consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fiber ($\chi^2=59.2047$ with 21 d.f.)) had a non-normal distribution at $\alpha=0.05$ level. Thus Spearman rank-order correlation test was selected because of the benefits of this test and non-normal distribution of some of the data.

To compare the currency of main data from 1986 with new data, the F test (one-way analysis of variance) was used to check any differences between the two samples for each variable. In addition, Spearman rank-order correlation tests of the original data were compared to Spearman rank-order correlation of the new data to check any changes in the relationships between consumer fashion characteristics and consumer involvement during the last few years.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate relationships between female college students' fashion characteristics (i.e. fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with the purchasing activity and with the following objects: name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers. This chapter includes presentation and discussion of the results of the data analysis. Also, this chapter also includes a discussion of the consistency between the original data collected in 1986 and new data collected in 1992.

Description of The Original Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 261 college female students from 1986 home economics classes. All subjects answered the questionnaire measuring fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership; 182 subjects answered the questionnaire measuring purchasing involvement; and 130 subjects answered the questionnaire measuring consumer involvement with name brand active shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A. and clothing made from natural fibers. Therefore, 182 observations were used to investigate the relationship between purchasing involvement and fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership (Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 7); 130 observations were used to investigate the relationship between fashion characteristics (i.e. fashion

innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A. and clothing made from natural fibers (H2 through H6 and H8 through H12); and 261 observations were used to investigate the relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership (H13). The subjects' ages ranged from 18-42 years with mean age being 20.5 years.

The Spearman rank order correlation test was conducted to determine the significance of the relationship between fashion innovativeness, fashion opinion leadership, and consumer involvement with the purchasing activity and with the products. Table 1 shows the correlations among fashion innovativeness /fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A. and clothing made from natural fibers. Table 2 shows the correlations between fashion innovativeness /fashion opinion leadership and purchasing involvement. Table 3 shows the correlations between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership.

Findings Related to Hypotheses

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients and significance levels to determine the acceptance or rejection of hypothesis 1 through hypothesis 13.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and purchasing involvement was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there is no significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and purchasing involvement.

Table 1

Spearman Rank Order Correlations Between Consumer Fashion Characteristics (FI & FOL) and Consumer Involvement

	FI	FOL	Name brands sports shoes	Fashion brand jeans	Designer underwear	Made in USA
Fashion Innovativeness	Coefficient (sig. level)					
Fashion opinion leadership	.4166** (.0000)					
Name brands sports shoes	.0648 (.4621)	.3218** (.0003)				
Fashion brand Jeans	.2870** (.0011)	.3886** (.0000)	.4372** (.0000)			
Designer Underwear	.1420 (.1067)	.3931** (.0000)	.3416** (.0001)	.5162** (.0000)		
Clothing made in USA	-.0253 (.7742)	.0212 (.8098)	.0224 (.7992)	-.0898 (.3075)	-.1149 (.1919)	
Clothing made from Natural fiber	.0987 (.2624)	.1688 (.0553)	.2433** (.0057)	.1410 (.1092)	.1734* (.0489)	.1980* (.0245)

Note. **p < 0.01. *p < 0.05. The number of observations used in this analysis is 130.

Table 2

Spearman Rank Order Correlations Between Consumer Fashion Characteristics(FI & FOL) and Purchasing Involvement.

	Fashion Innovativeness	Fashion Opinion Leadership
Fashion Innovativeness	Coefficient (sig. level)	
Fashion opinion leadership	.4794** (.0000)	
Purchasing Involvement	-.0115 (.8775)	.0356 (.6321)

Note. **p < 0.01. The number of observations used in this analysis is 182.

Table 3

Spearman Rank Order Correlations Between Fashion Innovativeness and Fashion OpinionLeadership

	Fashion Innovativeness	Fashion Opinion Leadership
Fashion Innovativeness	Coefficient (sig. Level)	
Fashion opinion Leadership	.4940** (.0000)	1.0000 (1.0000)

Note. **p < 0.01. The number of observation used in this analysis is 261.

Table 4

Spearman Rank Order Correlations of Original Sample Between Fashion Characteristics
(FI & FOL) and Consumer Involvement

	Fashion Opinion leadership	Fashion Innovativeness
Fashion opinion leadership	Coefficient (# of observation) Sig. level	0.4940** (261) 0.0000
Purchasing Involvement	0.0356 (182) 0.6321	-0.0115 (182) 0.8775
Consumer Involvement with Name brand sports shoes	0.3218** (130) 0.0003	0.0648 (130) 0.4621
Consumer Involvement with Fashion brand jeans	0.3886** (130) 0.0000	0.2870** (130) 0.0011
Consumer Involvement with Designer underwear	0.3931** (130) 0.0000	0.1420 (130) 0.1067
Consumer Involvement with clothing made in USA	0.0212 (130) 0.8098	-0.0253 (130) 0.7742
Consumer Involvement with clothing made from Natural fiber	0.1688 (130) 0.0553	0.0987 (130) 0.2624

Note. ** $p < 0.01$. * $p < 0.05$.

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes (i.e. Nike, Reebok, Adidas, New Balance, etc.) was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there is no significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes.

Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans (i.e. Calvin Klein, Guess, Generra) was accepted. Table 4 shows that there is a positive significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans (Spearman rank-order correlation (r_s) = .2870 and p = .0011). This means that subjects who scored high in fashion innovativeness were more involved with fashion brand jeans than subjects who scored low in fashion innovativeness. In other words, fashion innovators may be more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to fashion brand jeans than do non-fashion-innovators.

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with designer underwear was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with designer underwear.

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with clothing made in U.S.A. was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and clothing made in U.S.A.

Hypothesis 6. Hypothesis 6 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fibers was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion innovativeness and clothing made from natural fibers.

Hypothesis 7. Hypothesis 7 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and purchasing involvement (consumer involvement with purchasing activity) was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion opinion leadership and purchasing involvement.

Hypothesis 8. Hypothesis 8 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes was accepted. Table 4 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes ($r_s = .3218$ and $p = .0003$). College female students in this study who scored high in fashion opinion leadership were more involved with name brand sports shoes than consumers who scored low in fashion opinion leadership. In other words, fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to name brand sports shoes than do non-opinion leaders.

Hypothesis 9. Hypothesis 9 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans was accepted. Table 4 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans ($r_s = .3886$ and $p = .0000$). College female students in this study who scored high in fashion

opinion leadership were more involved with fashion brand jeans than subjects who scored low in fashion opinion leadership. In other words, fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to fashion brand jeans than do non-opinion-leaders.

Hypothesis 10. Hypothesis 10 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with designer underwear was accepted. Table 4 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with designer underwear ($r_s = .3931$ and $p = .0000$). College female students in this study who scored high in fashion opinion leadership were more involved with designer underwear than subjects who scored low in fashion opinion leadership. In other words, fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to designer underwear than do non-opinion-leaders.

Hypothesis 11. Hypothesis 11 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with clothing made in U.S.A.. was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with clothing made in U.S.A.

Hypothesis 12. Hypothesis 12 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fibers was not accepted. Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with clothing made from natural fibers.

Hypothesis 13. Hypothesis 13 which stated that there is a relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership was accepted. Table 4 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership ($r_s = .4940$ and $p = .0000$). The subjects who scored high in fashion innovativeness also scored high in fashion opinion leadership.

Comparison of Two Samples

Comparison of two samples using F test (one-way analysis of variance). F test (one-way analysis of variance) was used to compare the two samples for each variable (i.e. fashion innovativeness, fashion opinion leadership, purchasing involvement, consumer involvement with name brand sports shoe, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., clothing made from natural fibers). Table 5 shows the results of these statistical tests. There were no significant differences between original sample and new sample.

Comparison of two samples' correlations. The original sample and the new sample were also compared in terms of Spearman rank-order correlations for each. Table 6 show the new sample's Spearman rank-order correlations among fashion opinion leadership, fashion innovativeness, purchasing involvement, and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers.

According to Tables 6 and 7, a significant positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and fashion innovativeness ($r_s = .7063$ and $p = .0109$) resulted for the new sample. Also a significant negative relationship between fashion opinion

Table 5

Comparison Between Original Sample and New Sample Using F test (One-Way Analysis of Variance)

Variables	Mean value (# of observations)		F value	sig. level
	Original sample	New sample		
Fashion innovativeness	9.4317 (287)	8.9286 (14)	1.617	.2046
Fashion opinion leadership	8.2662 (287)	8.1429 (14)	.036	.8512
Purchasing involvement	154.1 (189)	151.0 (14)	.415	.5270
Consumer Involvement with name brand sports shoes	105.03 (135)	104.07 (14)	.017	.8986
Consumer Involvement with fashion brand jeans	92.363 (135)	95.857 (14)	.169	.6860
Consumer Involvement with designer underwear	75.415 (135)	74.0 (14)	.028	.8697
Consumer Involvement with clothing made from natural fiber	111.62 (135)	99.429 (14)	3.586	.0602
Consumer Involvement with clothing made in USA	82.311 (135)	92.5 (14)	2.269	.1341

Table 6

New Sample's Spearman Rank Order Correlations Between Consumer Fashion Characteristics (FI & FOL)
and Consumer Involvement

	FI	FOL	PI	Name brands shoes	Fashion brand jeans	Designer underwear	Made in USA
Fashion Innovativeness	Coefficient (Sig.level)						
Fashion opinion leadership	.7063* (.0109)						
Purchasing Involvement	-.1387 (.6171)	.0470 (.8653)					
Name brands sports shoes	.3181 (.2514)	.1072 (.6992)	.2939 (.2893)				
Fashion brand Jeans	-.4759 (.0862)	-.6280* (.0236)	.0376 (.8921)	.1709 (.5378)			
Designer underwear	-.2692 (.3317)	-.3717 (.1802)	.0619 (.8234)	.2192 (.4294)	.7652*** (.0058)		
Clothing Made in USA	.5117 (.0650)	.0424 (.8786)	.1302 (.6386)	.5919 (.0328)	-.1674 (.5461)	.0858 (.7570)	
Clothing made from natural fibers	-.1552 (.5757)	-.1107 (.6897)	-.0022 (.9936)	.0342 (.9018)	.4884 (.0782)	.4614 (.0962)	-.0838 (.7626)

Note. ***p < .01. *p < .05. The number of observations used in this analysis is 14.

Table 7
Spearman Rank Order Correlations of New Small Sample.

	Fashion Opinion leadership	Fashion Innovativeness
Fashion opinion leadership	Coefficient (# of observation) Sig. level	0.7063* (14) 0.0109
Purchasing Involvement	0.0470 (14) 0.8653	-0.1387 (14) 0.6171
Consumer Involvement with name brand sports shoes	0.1072 (14) 0.6992	0.3181 (14) 0.2514
Consumer Involvement with fashion brand jeans	-0.6280* (14) 0.0236	-0.4759 (14) 0.0862
Consumer Involvement with designer underwear	-0.3717 (14) 0.1802	-0.2692 (14) 0.3317
Consumer Involvement with clothing made in USA	0.0424 (14) 0.8786	0.5117 (14) 0.0650
Consumer Involvement with clothing made from natural fiber	-0.1107 (14) 0.6897	-0.1552 (14) 0.5757

Note. *p = 0.05.

leadership and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans ($r_s = -.6280$ and $p = .0236$) resulted.

Table 8 shows several differences between original sample and new sample for the relationships between variables. For the original sample, positive relationships between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes and designer underwear resulted, whereas, for the new sample, no significant relationships resulted between these variables. For the original sample, a positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans also resulted, whereas, for the new sample, a negative relationship resulted. For the original sample, a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans resulted, whereas, for the new sample, no significant relationship resulted between these variables.

There was no change during the last few years in the relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. For the original sample and for the new sample, a significant positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership was found.

Table 8

The Differences Between Original Sample and New Sample

Fashion Opinion Leadership		
	Original sample	New sample
Consumer Involvement with		
Name Brand Sports Shoes	positive relationship	no relationship
Fashion brand Jeans	positive relationship	negative relationship
Designer Underwear	positive relationship	no relationship
Fashion Innovativeness		
	Original sample	New sample
Consumer Involvement with		
Fashion brand Jeans	positive relationship	no relationship

Chapter V

Summary, Implications and Recommendations

Summary

Consumer decision making involves the following steps: problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase, and post purchase processes. There are many factors influencing consumer decision making (i.e. external factors including social class and status, culture, values of demographic and sub-cultural groups, and reference groups; internal factors including the individual's personality, involvement, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, memory, learning, personal needs, and experience). Involvement, one of the internal factors affecting the consumer decision making process, reflects a strong motivation in the form of high perceived personal relevance of a product or a service in a particular context. Because a higher degree of involvement by a consumer typically leads to a more extended consumer decision process, the consumer decision process is often related to a consumer's level of involvement.

A new fashion object spreads among consumers within a society through a diffusion process which includes the following stages: (1) invention and introduction of new styles, (2) adoption by fashion leaders, (3) increasing social visibility, (4) conformity within and across social groups, (5) social saturation, and (6) decline and obsolescence. Consumers are often classified by the timing of their fashion adoption. Fashion innovators initiate or are the first to use an innovative fashion. Fashion

opinion leaders and early conformists adopt the style and influence others in the acceptance of the fashion innovation. Mass market consumers adopt the style during the acceptance stages (i.e., the increasing social visibility stage and the conformity within/across social groups stage). Late fashion followers adopt fashion object during its decline. Fashion isolates (and laggards) adopt the style once it has entered the stage of obsolescence. Non-adopters do not adopt the style.

Fashion innovativeness refers to perceived personal preference or/and acceptance for new or avant-garde styles. Fashion innovators have been found to be more secure socially and more tolerant of ambiguity than non-innovators. It has been suggested that fashion innovators tolerate uncertainty, ambiguity, and difference of opinion, and do not tend to compromise their values to please others or to confirm. Fashion innovators may also have greater interest in fashion and knowledge of and experience with fashion clothing (Gatignon, & Robertson, 1991; Schrank, 1970). Thus, there may be positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with clothing fashion.

Fashion opinion leadership refers to a perceived characteristic reflecting an individual's influence on his or her peer group in the acceptance of a fashion innovation. Fashion opinion leadership has been found to be positively related to self-monitoring, attitudes-toward-conformity, and interest in clothing (Davis & Lennon, 1985; Schrank, 1970). It appears that the fashion opinion leaders may use clothing as means of attention seeking, as means of conforming to others, and as a vehicle for peer approval. Also, they have been found to possess higher levels of clothing

interest than non-leaders. Thus fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with clothing fashion than consumers with low fashion opinion leadership.

Data from an existing data set were used for the present study. The subjects of this sample were 261 female college students who were from three home economics classes (68 from winter 1986 class, 76 from spring 1986 class and 117 from fall 1986 class). In class, each subject voluntarily completed questionnaires about fashion innovativeness, fashion opinion leadership, and consumer involvement with the purchasing activity, and with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear, clothing made in U.S.A., and clothing made from natural fibers. Spearman rank-order correlation was used to test relationships among the variables. To examine currency of the original data, data were also collected from a small sample of 14 female college students from a fall 1992 home economic class. In class, each subject completed the same questionnaires completed by the original sample. Spearman rank-order correlations from the two data sets were compared to examine any changes in the relationships among consumer involvement and fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership over time.

For the original sample, there was a positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans. Also, there were positive relationships between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, and designer underwear.

Fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to name brands or designer label than do non-leaders.

According to Davis (1988), designer labeled clothing was perceived as more fashionable. And, according to Holstius & Paltschik (1983), people who were interested in fashion were willing to pay more for designer labels and appeared to give greater perceptive importance to designer labels. Fashion opinion leaders "are highly involved in keeping up with fashion trends" (Kaiser, 1990, p. 497). Thus, these relationships may be because the items were perceived as fashion trends or were considered fashionable.

Fashion innovativeness was related to consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans but not with name brand sports shoes or designer underwear. It may be that fashion innovators are more involved with and give greater perceptive importance to name brand (/designer label) clothing such as jeans than to name brand sports shoes and designer underwear. Fashion innovators may perceive greater "trendiness" in designer jeans than in name brand sport shoes or designer underwear.

Similar to past research (Davis, 1987; Lennon & Davis, 1987; Schrank, 1970), there was strong positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. Also, no relationship between fashion innovativeness (/fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with purchasing was found.

Comparisons between the original data (1986) and the new data (1992) indicated some changes in the relationships between fashion innovativeness (\fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with particular products. The positive relationships between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with name brand sports shoes and designer underwear found with the original sample was

not found with the new sample. A positive relationship between fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans was found with the original sample; whereas a negative relationship was found with the new sample. Furthermore, the positive relationship between fashion innovativeness and consumer involvement with fashion brand jeans found with the original sample was not found with the new sample. These changes might be caused by changes in perceptions of the fashionability of particular objects over time. Fashion innovators (fashion opinion leaders) may be involved differently with the particular objects over time depending on the perceived instrumental values of the particular fashion objects.

Implications

Theoretical implications. According to Engel et al. (1990),

Involvement is best conceived as a function of person, object, and situation. The starting point always is with the person-underlying motivations in the form of needs and values, which are a reflection of self-concept. Involvement is activated when the object (a product, service, or promotional message) is perceived as being instrumental in meeting important needs, goals, and values. (p. 258)

Consumer involvement is influenced by personal factors (including self-concept, needs, and values), object or stimulus factors (including instrumental value, differentiation of alternatives, perceived risk, and hedonic benefit), and situational factors (including temporary vs. stable conditions, differing usage situations, and social pressures) (Engel et al., 1990; Zaichkowsky, 1986). In this study, fashion innovativeness (fashion opinion leadership) was related to consumer involvement with particular fashion product(s) among a sample of female college students. It was believed that consumers who possess high fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion

leadership characteristics may have special needs and values. Thus, when the objects are perceived as being instrumental in meeting the needs, goals, and values, the consumer may be highly involved with the objects. Thus, fashion innovativeness\ fashion opinion leadership may be personal characteristics which influence consumer involvement with fashion products. Results of the study found some support for this belief. Although, for the sample studied, fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership was not found to be related to the general characteristics of purchasing involvement, fashion opinion leadership and innovativeness were related to involvement with specific fashion products.

According to past research (Davis, 1987; Rogers, 1983; Schrank, 1970), innovativeness and opinion leadership are highly correlated. This study found again that fashion innovativeness were positively related to fashion opinion leadership. Thus persons who have high fashion innovativeness tend to have high fashion opinion leadership.

Applied implications. According to the results of the original data, positive relationships between fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership and consumer involvement with particular products (i.e., name brand sports shoes, fashion brand jeans, designer underwear) were found. Thus, name brands or designer labels may get attention from consumers who have high level of consumers involvement with these products. Retailers may gain benefits by carrying name brands or designer label products for consumers who have high fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership. Changes found in the relationships between the original data and the new

data suggest that there are changes over time in perceptions of the brand name or designer label products among people who have high fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership. Therefore, marketers who target consumers who possess high fashion innovativeness/fashion opinion leadership should monitor possible changes in consumers' perception of the brand name.

Limitations

Original data were collected among female college students who took home economics classes in 1986 at Oregon State University. The results of the original data analysis regarding relationships between fashion innovativeness (fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement were limited to the population of the original sample.

New data were collected from a small sample (14) of female college students who took a home economics class in 1992 from the same university. Because of small sample size (14) of new sample, the accuracy of the comparison between the original data to new data may be in question. Differing results regarding relationships between fashion innovativeness (/fashion opinion leadership) and consumer involvement with particular object for the two samples suggests that the instrumental value of the objects studied may have changed over time. Furthermore, the results are limited to female college students at Oregon State University.

There was a limitation caused from the scale used to measure fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. This scale measured self-reported fashion innovativeness and fashion opinion leadership. Thus, there may be

differences between objective "real" behavior and self-perceived behavior regarding innovativeness and opinion leadership.

Recommendations for Further Research

To marketers, a target markets' involvement with their products is an important factor in promoting their products because consumers may respond differently to advertising media due to differing levels of involvement with the product.

Similar to past research (Davis, 1987), there was no relationship between consumer fashion characteristics (FI & FOL) and purchasing involvement, in general. Fashion innovators/fashion opinion leaders are no more and no less involved with purchasing activities related to general products than non-innovators/non-leaders. However, because fashion innovators/fashion opinion leaders may be more involved with particular products whose instrumental values are perceived as important to them, they may more involved with purchasing activities related to the particular products than non-innovators/non-opinion leaders. Someone who possesses high level of purchasing involvement, in general, may not be highly involved with purchasing activities surrounding a particular product. Thus, there appears to be a need for a scale measuring consumer involvement with purchasing activities surrounding individual products. It may be that one's level of consumer involvement with purchasing activities surrounding individual product may be a better indicator the consumer behavior toward the product than is one's level of consumer involvement, in general.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Scale Measuring Fashion Innovativeness and Fashion Opinion Leadership

Are you willing to try new ideas about clothing fashions? How often?

- ☐ often
- ☐ sometimes
- ☐ seldom
- ☐ never
- ☐ don't know

Do you try something new in the next season's fashions? How often?

- ☐ often
- ☐ sometimes
- ☐ seldom
- ☐ never
- ☐ don't know

Are you usually among the last to try new clothing fashions? How often?

- ☐ often
- ☐ sometimes
- ☐ seldom
- ☐ never
- ☐ don't know

How often do you influence the types of clothing fashions your friends buy?

- ☐ often
- ☐ sometimes
- ☐ seldom
- ☐ never
- ☐ don't know

How often do others turn to you for advice on fashion and clothing?

- ☐ often
- ☐ sometimes
- ☐ seldom
- ☐ never
- ☐ don't know

How many of your friends and neighbors regard you as a good source of advice on clothing fashions?

- ☐ almost everyone
- ☐ more than half
- ☐ less than half
- ☐ almost no one
- ☐ don't know

APPENDIX B

Scale Measuring Purchasing Involvement

The following are some questions about your purchase behavior. READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY AND CIRCLE QUICKLY THE LETTER WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FEELING ABOUT THE STATEMENT.

STRONGLY AGREE = SA
 AGREE = A
 SLIGHTLY AGREE = sa
 SLIGHTLY DISAGREE = sd
 DISAGREE = D
 STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD

On most purchase decisions the choice I make is of little consequence.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Usually reading about products or asking people about them won't really help you make a decision.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I have little or no interest in shopping.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Consumer Reports is not very relevant to me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I am not interested in bargain seeking.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I am not interested in sales.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
You can't save a lot of money by careful shopping.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I often take advantage of coupon offers in the newspaper.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Because of my personal values I feel that "smart purchasing" ought to be important to me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I usually am not annoyed when I find out I could have bought something cheaper than I did.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Being a smart shopper is worth the extra time it takes.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Even with inexpensive products like shampoo, I will often evaluate a recent purchase and become annoyed because the product doesn't adequately meet my needs.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Sales don't excite me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I am not really committed to getting the most for my money.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
For expensive items I spend a lot of time and effort making my purchase decision since it is importance to get the best deal.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Consumerism issues are irrelevant to me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I view the purchasing of goods and services as a rather petty activity; not relevant to my main concerns in life.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD

It is not worth it to read Consumer reports since most brands are about the same.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
You can save a lot of money by clipping coupons from the newspaper.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Thinking about what you are going to buy before going shopping won't make much difference in your long run expenditures.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
It doesn't make much sense to get upset over a purchase decision since most brands are about the same.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I am willing to spend extra time shopping in order to get the cheapest price on goods of like quality.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I pay attention to advertisements for products I am interested in.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
Shopping wisely is a rather petty issue compared to thinking about how to make more money.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I don't like worrying about getting the best deal when I go shopping, I like to spend money as I please.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I don't like to waste a lot of time trying to get good deals on groceries.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
It is important to me to be aware of all the alternatives before buying an expensive appliance.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
It is important to me to keep up with special deals being offered by the grocery stores in my area.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
I am too absorbed in more personally relevant matters to worry about making smart purchases.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
It is part of my values systems to shop around for the best buy.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
The consumer and business sections of the newspaper are highly relevant to me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
If I were buying a major appliance it wouldn't make much difference which brand I chose.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD
The brands of goods I buy make very little difference to me.	SA	A	sa	sd	D	SD

APPENDIX C

Scale Measuring Consumer Involvement with Products

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure a person's involvement or interest in clothing the regularly purchase or have purchased in the past. To take this measure, we need you to judge various clothing items against a series of descriptive scales according to how YOU perceive the clothing item. Here is how you are to use these scales:

If you feel that the clothing item that appears at top of the page is very closely related to one end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

Unimportant × : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Important

OR

Unimportant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : × Important

If you feel that the clothing item is quite closely related to one or the other end of the scale (but not extremely), you should place your check mark as follows:

Appealing ___ : × : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unappealing

OR

Appealing ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : × : ___ Unappealing

If you feel that the clothing item seems only slightly related (but not really neutral) to one end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

Uninterested ___ : ___ : × : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Interested

OR

Uninterested ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : × : ___ : ___ Interested

Important

1. Be sure that you check every scale for every clothing item; do not omit any.
2. Never put more than one check mark on a single scale.

Make each item a separate and independent judgment. Work at a fairly high speed through this questionnaire. Do not worry or puzzle over individual items. It is your first impressions, the immediate feelings about the items, that we want. On the other hand, please do not be careless, because we want your true impressions.

Thank you.

Clothing item NAME BRAND ACTIVE SPORT SHOES (e.g. Nike, Reebok, Adidas, New Balance, etc.)

Important ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unimportant
 of no concern ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ of concern to me
 irrelevant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ relevant
 means a lot to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ means nothing to me
 useless ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ useful
 valuable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ worthless
 trivial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fundamental
 beneficial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ not beneficial
 matters to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ doesn't matter
 uninterested ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interested
 significant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ insignificant
 vital ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ superfluous
 boring ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interesting
 unexciting ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ exciting
 appealing ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unappealing
 mundane ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fascinating
 essential ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ nonessential
 undesirable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ desirable
 wanted ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unwanted
 not needed ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ needed

Clothing item "FASHION" JEANS (e.g. Calvin Klein, Guess, Generra
not Levi's, Wrangler, or Lee)

Important ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unimportant
 of no concern ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ of concern to me
 irrelevant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ relevant
 means a lot to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ means nothing to me
 useless ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ useful
 valuable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ worthless
 trivial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fundamental
 beneficial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ not beneficial
 matters to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ doesn't matter
 uninterested ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interested
 significant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ insignificant
 vital ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ superfluous
 boring ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interesting
 unexciting ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ exciting
 appealing ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unappealing
 mundane ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fascinating
 essential ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ nonessential
 undesirable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ desirable
 wanted ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unwanted
 not needed ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ needed

Clothing item DESIGNER UNDERWEAR

Important ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unimportant
 of no concern ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ of concern to me
 irrelevant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ relevant
 means a lot to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ means nothing to me
 useless ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ useful
 valuable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ worthless
 trivial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fundamental
 beneficial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ not beneficial
 matters to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ doesn't matter
 uninterested ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interested
 significant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ insignificant
 vital ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ superfluous
 boring ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interesting
 unexciting ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ exciting
 appealing ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unappealing
 mundane ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fascinating
 essential ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ nonessential
 undesirable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ desirable
 wanted ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unwanted
 not needed ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ needed

Clothing item CLOTHING MADE ONLY IN THE UNITED STATES

Important ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ Unimportant
 of no concern ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ of concern to me
 irrelevant ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ relevant
 means a lot to me ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ means nothing to me
 useless ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ useful
 valuable ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ worthless
 trivial ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ fundamental
 beneficial ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ not beneficial
 matters to me ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ doesn't matter
 uninterested ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ interested
 significant ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ insignificant
 vital ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ superfluous
 boring ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ interesting
 unexciting ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ exciting
 appealing ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ unappealing
 mundane ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ fascinating
 essential ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ nonessential
 undesirable ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ desirable
 wanted ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ unwanted
 not needed ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ needed

Clothing item CLOTHING MADE ONLY OF NATURAL FIBERS (e.g. cotton, wool, silk, linen not polyester, acrylic, etc.)

Important ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ Unimportant
 of no concern ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ of concern to me
 irrelevant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ relevant
 means a lot to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ means nothing to me
 useless ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ useful
 valuable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ worthless
 trivial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fundamental
 beneficial ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ not beneficial
 matters to me ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ doesn't matter
 uninterested ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interested
 significant ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ insignificant
 vital ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ superfluous
 boring ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ interesting
 unexciting ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ exciting
 appealing ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unappealing
 mundane ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ fascinating
 essential ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ nonessential
 undesirable ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ desirable
 wanted ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ unwanted
 not needed ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ needed